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AN OLD MILL IN THE JURA MOUNTAINS.—C. E. DUBOISE.

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MY CHRISTMAS REVENGE.

I DO not think there is any need of my explaining how it happened, that I, who when born had expectations of quite a fair fortune, should have found myself, when womanhood came, obliged to earn my daily bread. But so it was; and in one of the large sewing-machine emporiums (no matter which one) of a leading American city, I held a position as a teacher for several years.

My duties were very monotonous; but I used to extract a considerable amount of interest and amusement, while engaged in giving instruction, from learning the histories—and they were very varied—of my scholars. If the proverbial cup of tea unlocks the female tongue, I found that a lesson on the machine, and initiation into the mysteries of setting a needle, winding a bobbin, and regulating a tension, were even more conducive to communication. I do not wish to appear egotistical; but I must confess to quite a power which I seemed to possess of gaining the confidence of my pupils, through my habit of taking an interest in them; also that I was very fond of an "over true tale;" perhaps some malicious critic would call my propensity by no higher name than female curiosity.

Even now, though time has brought its changes to me, and I no longer haunt the old familiar places, I often find myself recalling one and another among the many romances and stories in which I figured as an interested and sympathetic listener, and occasionally an unsuspected actor.

The present recollection always comes back to me at the Christmas time; and therefore when the season rolls around again, with its merriment and cheer, its mistletoe and holly, its written and unwritten tragedies and comedies of life, I feel like recounting it to others.

The position of instructor brought me almost entirely in contact with my own sex. Sometimes I had a male pupil—one of a mildly mechanical turn, who would wish to become familiar with the machine, so as to be able to assist some wife or sister; but the instruction-room, as a rule, was usually quite free from frequent visits of the sterner sex.

During the fall of a special year I became conscious, however, that a certain Mr. Harry Lee, a gentleman whom I knew to be an intimate acquaintance of one of my employers, and whose face was quite well known to all in the establishment, began to occasionally drop into my department and look on during instruction hours. He was very pleasant and gentlemanly in his manners, and gave as an excuse for the interest he took, that he was a born Yankee and therefore very fond of inventions.

Although there were other teachers, I discovered that he lingered most frequently in my vicinity, and seemed more interested in my conversation than that of my companions. I was young at the time, and no doubt had the usual desire of my sex to please. I felt flattered, perhaps, at his respectful at-

tention, and took particular pains to make my observations on "what I knew about sewing-machines" as intelligent as my limited powers permitted. He soon became a frequent visitor, and sometimes when business was dull would linger and converse on other subjects besides the technicalities of the trade. I found that he was well educated, had traveled considerably in his own country, and knew, as they say, "men and things." His intimate friendship with one of the firm prevented any remarks as to the frequency of his visits; and he made the additional apology for possible intrusion, that he was very much at his leisure, and sometimes thought of connecting himself with the business. I must admit that I was quite interested in him, and felt pleased when sometimes he would bring me some favorite book about which we had conversed and exchanged views, or ask my opinion on some magazine article

fashionable creatures against whom he railed so bitterly—a look of pain passed across his face, that set me to thinking that I had touched a sore spot in his experience.

We became very good friends, eventually; indeed, I am afraid that should I confess to the truth, we indulged a little in harmless and pleasant flirtation. I know that I was always pleased to see him; and I am sure that he often lingered beside me in a manner savoring a little of devotion. Still this was only on the surface; and I grew more and more certain from a melancholy that often possessed him, that there was some secret connected with his domestic life, of an unhappy character.

At last, from an accidental remark of one of my employers, I discovered the "skeleton in his closet." He was a married man, but separated from his wife. I think that I felt a little pained at the information;

and I certainly could not help the coldness of my manner when next I met him. He saw the change, and asked with his eyes for an explanation, though not with his tongue. Had he taken the latter liberty, it is very possible that I might have told him, and then—this story would never have been written! As it was, a few hours thoroughly calmed me; showed me something of the imprudence of which I had been guilty, in making so close an acquaintance with a man about whom I knew literally nothing; and roused all the woman within me, in pride and a dim suspicion of revenge.

That revenge was much nearer than I could possibly have dreamed; and unlike most revenges, no sorrow is entailed by the recollection. But of that anon. Following the discovery, the first thing I did was to enlarge it by ascertaining particulars—how, is a matter of no consequence in connection with this story. What I additionally discovered, however, is of consequence.

He had married a petted, wayward, beautiful girl—the only child of wealthy parents, who had by injudicious management fostered every weakness of her character. He had formed her acquaintance, and married her after a short courtship, while on a visit to her native town, and after a few months removed to the city where he now made his residence. He had brought her home to the house of his mother, who, with his sister, was of the

true New England type. They were thorough-going, practical women, notable housekeepers, slightly Puritanical in their beliefs, and holding very little sympathy with youth and inexperience. The young wife was impulsive, unused to discipline of any kind, careless, ignorant of any habits of industry, but warm-hearted and affectionate. No doubt a very troublesome relative to the staid, methodical women with whom she took up her residence.

Unfortunately for the wife, also, her husband had been taught to look up to his mother and sister as the best of women, and had fondly fancied that when his new treasure came under their control all those little weaknesses of which he had soon become aware after marriage, would be cured by their example and advice. But his sanguine hopes were doomed to early disappointment. Instead of his wife growing docile and yielding, she became more willful and intractable, rebelled with a high spirit against any rule, and looked upon her husband more as a companion with whom to enjoy the amusements of fashionable society, than as a helpmate and friend with whom to pass through the trials and cares of life. Still she



CAUGHT!—HENRY LOSSON.

had a kind heart and warm affections; and had more love and sympathy been exhibited in connection with efforts to change her habits, and less cold, severe exactions shown on the part of her husband's relatives, the event might have been better for all. At last the usual result followed. Quarrels became of frequent occurrence; estrangement grew up between husband and wife; and it was only a year after their marriage that the young wife, one day, after a passionate outbreak and most unhappy scene with her husband, left his home and returned to that of her parents. Here she was not only received with open arms, but consoled and sympathized with to her great injury—a divorce proposed, and all chance of reconciliation destroyed.

Such was the painful story, as I gathered the particulars—no rare one in the world, I am quite aware, and yet sad enough as embodying the wreck of two lives. Perhaps a knowledge of the whole softened my pride toward Mr. Lee a trifle, though it by no means cured my wounded self-respect or put me more at ease with myself. What more acquaintance might have followed is uncertain; perhaps none whatever, under the changed conditions; nor have I the clearest idea how my revenge would have been accomplished, had I not been favored by new and unexpected circumstances.

It was in the month of December that one very cold and blustering morning a lady was ushered into the instruction-room by one of the salesmen. She was a young and remarkably pretty woman, as I discovered at the first glance, and dressed very becomingly in the prevailing mode. The usual remarks that "she was afraid she would be stupid," and my reassurance that I had taught pupils from twelve to eighty in age and from Irish Norah to the Hon. Mrs. Highflyer in position, passed between us; and then, after feet were comfortably warmed, and gloves removed, the lesson began. Upon the raising of her veil, as she seated herself, I discovered that her beautiful brown eyes showed traces of recent tears; and several times as the lesson progressed an unconsciously drawn long sigh or sob proved very plainly that she had lately passed through some strong emotion, and that nature was kindly restoring the equilibrium.

In the course of the lesson, that day, she told me that she was married and the mother of a little boy somewhat over a year old. She hinted at trouble in connection with her marriage relations, and of late news that had caused the past night to be spent very unhappily. She seemed low-spirited, and deeply ashamed of her ignorance as regarded all knowledge of sewing or the construction of the simplest garment. I encouraged her—told her that patience and application only were necessary, as she showed very good natural abilities and would learn easily. But she replied sadly that she was afraid that those were virtues she had never cultivated, nor even until lately deemed at all necessary. She assured me that I could form no idea how useless and helpless she had been. She had never liked to sew, and her mother had never wished her to do so, telling her that there were plenty of poor people who would be glad to do such labor instead. She hoped I would not laugh at some of her no doubt trifling and silly questions, as she had never even made a garment of any kind in her life—not even a little one for her baby! I laughed good-naturedly: I could not help it; and told her that she took too severe a view of

her deficiencies—that there were plenty of other ladies just like her; but she said, smiling a little mournfully in return, that if I knew how bitterly she had lately begun to understand what an uneducated woman in useful matters she was, and how inconvenient she had found the position, I would not wonder at her desire to do better.

This first lesson was succeeded by others, for several days following, during which I learned that she had been married between two and three years; that she had always before her marriage led a gay and luxurious existence, perhaps because she had never known of any other, her parents being fashionable butterflies; that she had passed through a great sorrow, been very sick when her babe was born, and now was just beginning to appreciate some of the realities of life. She confessed that it was when recovering from a sick-bed, and among the new and

soon to sail for Europe, and the thought that they would then be utterly and forever separated had nearly driven her to distraction.

I felt very sorry—never more so for any human being; her repentance was so sincere and her sorrow so hopeless. A dim suspicion had been creeping through my mind during this last relation, that I had heard a story something akin to this before; and as she was about leaving I reminded her that although we were well acquainted as teacher and pupil, I had never yet heard her name. Apologizing for her remissness, she handed me a card as she left the room. I will not say that I was very much surprised, for I had half guessed the coincidence by intuition,—when I read on the card I held in my hand, "Mrs. Gracie Lee."

Yes, it was Harry Lee's wife who had been my pupil! A great many strange feelings were at work within my breast during the next ten minutes. I had not seen Mr. Lee for some time; he had avoided the instruction-room—a course of conduct for which I had been thankful. I had heard nothing of his intention of going to Europe, and felt sure it must be a new project, very suddenly thought of. And why? Had my actions anything to do with it? I felt sorely distressed before I had done thinking out the whole matter; and I might have been even more so had I not possessed a resource always so dear to women and children—that of *doing something*.

Now the rest of this is going to be very brief. On my bed, that night, the desire to "do something," born of the necessity, took practical shape, and I saw my way to my revenge on Harry Lee. Dickens' Christmas stories were then in the height of their popularity; I had been fascinated by them, and to their influence and that of the approaching holy season perhaps my plans were chiefly due. I hope my imaginary blushes may be spared, when I say that to accomplish it I took occasion to throw myself into Mr. Lee's way (of course by apparent accident), and that within a week I had won him back to the instruction-room and the renewal of our friendly chats, though at such hours (late in the afternoon) that there was no chance of his meeting his wife. That I never labored harder with any pupil than with that willing but nervous little lady,

to enable her rapidly to become not only proficient at the machine, but to *seem* so. Then that I progressed by making an appointment with Mrs. Lee, on some excuse as to my convenience, at four o'clock on the afternoon before Christmas—(Christmas Eve at a very early stage of the anniversary), and meanwhile gained a character for benevolence by telling my companions in teaching, that they had better go home early and thus enjoy the gay sights and sounds presented by the streets on that festive season. And then that I crowned the whole by making another appointment with Mr. Harry Lee, for the same place, half an hour later, having in view the necessity of bringing him unexpectedly upon his wife at the very moment when she should be sewing away at the top of her ability.

Once upon a time I kept an extraordinary bug that I had captured, under a glass tumbler, for days, to see the change by which it would become something else. It effected the change one night when I could not see it, and I was left very little wiser than before. And I know not much more about the meeting between Harry Lee and his wife, over the sewing-



THE RIVALS.—JEAN LABAYE.



WINTER PASTIMES.

machine, that evening before Christmas; as (confound it!) I felt myself obliged to leave them alone together just at the interesting moment, and they had made it all up before I thought it proper to return!

However, I had my revenge. Mr. Lee (I wish to be understood and believed on this point) never flirted any more with me, however mildly—"never no more." He went to Europe, but a little later, and took his wife, leaving his little son with his notable New England mother, who was sure to take good care of him though she might not permit him to romp too hilariously. They were kind enough to believe that I had been of service to them; and I was the recipient of certain rings, one of which Harry Lee gave me with what I thought was rather a conscious look, and the other of which Gracie Lee gave me with no shamefacedness and a hearty kiss.

I saw them together, and at home again, in a pretty new home over which, taught by some mistakes in the past, the wife was sole mistress, apparently very happy, the next Christmas; and I think that Mrs. Lee, under some sort of idea that she owed the recovery of her husband to her sewing-machine, looked upon that useful article as a species of good

fairy, and her seat at it as a place of refuge, and always was to be found sewing when things went at all crooked in the household.

My after-acquaintance with them, at all events, showed that the indolent, useless, and self-willed wife had become the busy, useful, and gentle one; and that the husband, who had begun by misunderstanding her, had come fully back to his senses, and grown much wiser as to the quality of the woman with whom he had been intrusted. And something of this, if not all of it, was the result of a little flirtation nipped in the bud, and of My Christmas Revenge.

—Kitty Wing.

NEW YEAR'S BELLS.

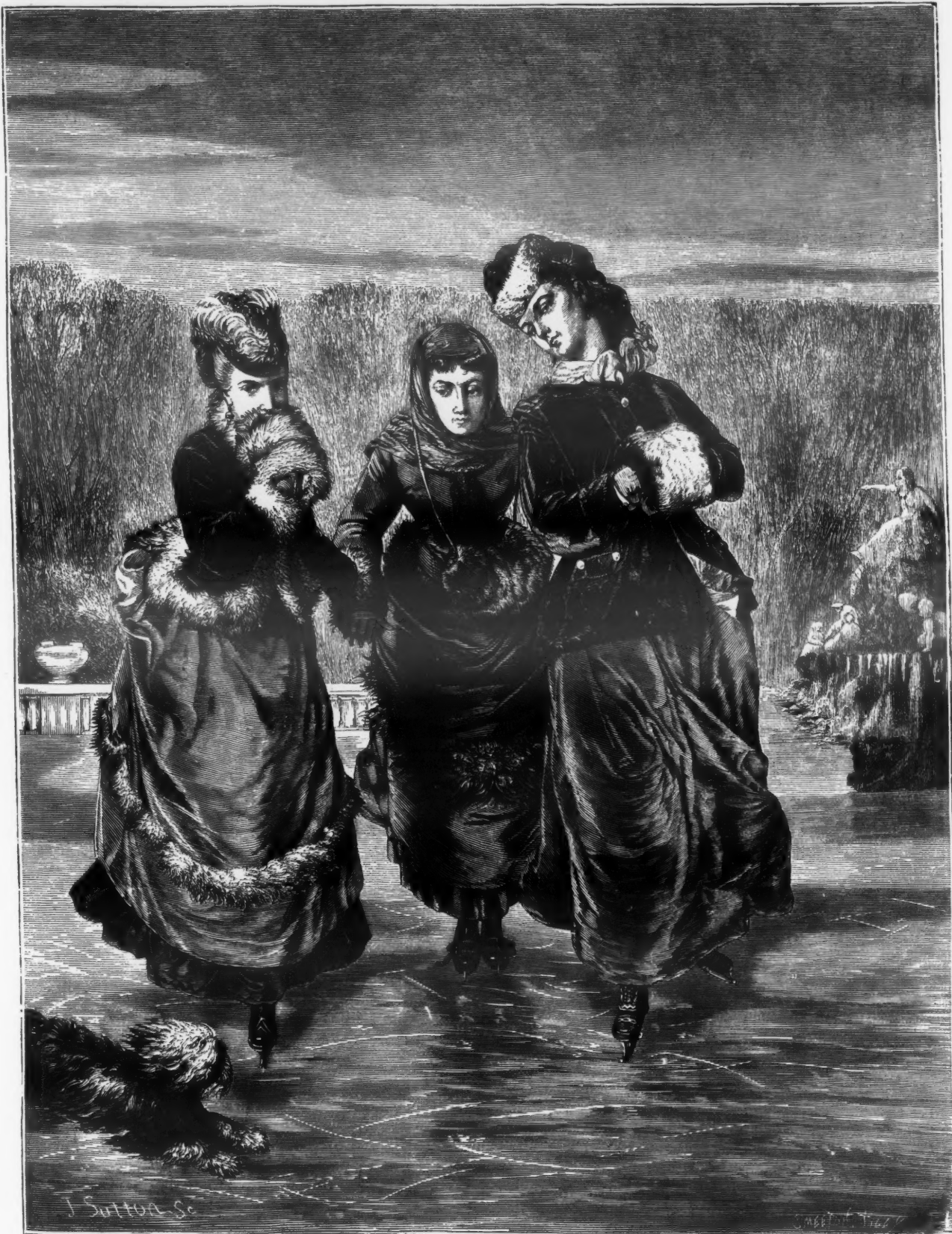
RING, bells, ring, with your mellow din,
Ring the old year out and the new year in!
Like the voices of birds from the old gray spire,
Let your silvery music rise higher and higher;
Floating abroad o'er the hillside bare
In billows of sound on the tremulous air,
Let it rise and fall with the fitful gale:
Tell over city and wood the tale;
Say that to-night the old year dies!
Bid the watchers look to the eastern skies,

For the beautiful halo that tells afar
Of the welcome rise of the new year's star!

Ring the old year out, with its sighs and tears,
Its withering heart-aches and tiresome fears;
Away with its memories of doubt and wrong,
Its cold deceits and its envyings strong,
All its pandering lures to the faltering sense,
All its pitiful shams and cold pretense.
We will heap them together and bind them fast
To the old man's load as he totters past.
The ills that he brought he may take again;
Keep we the joys, let him bury the pain!
Ring soft, oh bells, as he goes to rest
Far in the shades of the darkening west!

Ring, bells, ring, with a merry din!
The old year has gone with its care and sin!
Smiling and fair, at the eastern gates,
Clad in tinted light, the new year waits!
Welcome him in with the rosy band,
Who wait the wave of his beckoning hand:
Hope, with her wreaths of sweet spring flowers,—
Joy for the summer's glowing hours,
Plenty and peace for the fruitful fall,
And love for all seasons—best of all.
Ring merrily, bells!—o'er the blushing skies
See the beautiful star of the new year rise!

—Mrs. L. M. Blinn.



THE FIRST LESSON.

A GROUP OF OUR PICTURES.

UNDER the requirements of a holiday number, we are obliged to group, with a very few words of description or comment for each, several of the pictures in the present issue, of sufficient excellence and notability to demand, under other circumstances, an extended examination of each. First of these is the "Old Mill in the Jura Mountains," on the first page, an exquisite engraving from a very fine picture by Mr. C. E. Duboise, an American artist for many years studying in Europe, and especially devoted to the delineation of nature in her moods of blended softness and grandeur. The view is a characteristic one, of one of the picturesque and half-hidden places, so many of which the tourist can discover in his rambles through the Jura range, forming that portion of the noble boundary between France and Switzerland. The subject is well selected, and the handling is so natural that literally the whole seems like a glimpse of nature through a window. The rocks, high up in the mountain, are barren enough; but the water,

leaving them bare, has filtered down the gorge, making a striking contrast through the rich vegetation in the foreground. The old wheels of the mill are wet and mossy, brought out in strong relief against the gleaming light color of the wall. There is equal strength and fidelity in this picture, marking the growing power of an artist about whom we may have something to say, more at length, at no distant day. Two very pleasant stories, scarcely needing a word of explanation, are told in the companion-pictures, "Winter Pastimes" and "The First Lesson." In the first, one of the queens of beauty, sitting on a heavily furred sledge, is being propelled by an expert skater, handsome enough to deserve his pleasant task; while two female skaters, companions, who have found themselves in the way of the coming sledge, have found a novel way of allowing it to pass, by throwing themselves apart, though with locked hands raised high—thus forming a sort of triumphal arch for the rider and her escort, to the latter of whom (*en passant*) they are giving a somewhat flattering regard as he goes by. The second conveys

something which many of us may remember, with a suspicion of aching bones: that first lesson on the slippery steel and the treacherous ice, when the legs would insist upon taking a superior position, throwing the head and the body into undignified temporary subjection. It needs careful hands to sustain the neophyte, in such a case; and such careful hands are afforded to the experimenter in the present instance, who will, no doubt, after a little practice, come to skim the frozen surface like her bird-winged sisters. "Caught!" tells its own story very charmingly, though there is a painful doubt left on the mind, whether some one will come to release the imprisoned gown from the door, in time to save the contents of the tureen, evidently hot and probably appetizing; and there is something of a corresponding doubt left by the companion-picture, "The Rivals," as to whether the owner of the two pets really loves the bird that she is caressing, better than the four-footed pet asking so anxiously for a similar favor, and whether, consequently, Fido really has any reason for his evident jealousy of his biped rival. ... Turning



MARY OF THE WILD MOOR.—JOHN S. DAVIS.

to another picture of exquisite beauty, both in handling and the selection of a subject, it is only necessary to say that if the heroine of "What Keeps Him?" is kept long in that position, the man who so detains her should be obliged to change places with the handsome dog watching over her safety.

MARY OF THE WILD MOOR.

ONE night when the wind it blew cold,
Blew bitter across the wild moor,
Young Mary she came with her child,
Wandering home to her own father's door;
Crying, "Father, O pray let me in,
'Take pity on me, I implore,
Or the child at my bosom will die,
From the winds that blow 'cross the wild moor."
"O, why did I leave this fair cot,
Where once I was happy and free?
Doomed to roam without friends or a home,
O, father, take pity on me."

But her father was deaf to her cries,
Not a voice or a sound reach'd the door,
But the watch-dogs did bark, and the winds
Blew bitter across the wild moor.

O, how must her father have felt,
When he came to the door in the morn?
There he found Mary dead, and the child
Fondly clasped in its dead mother's arms.
While in frenzy he tore his gray hairs,
As on Mary he gazed, at the door;
For that night she had perished and died,
From the winds that blew 'cross the wild moor.

The father in grief pined away,
The child to the grave was soon borne;
And no one lives there to this day,
For the cottage to ruin has gone.
The villagers point out the spot
Where a willow droops over the door:
Saying, "There Mary perished and died,
From the winds that blew 'cross the wild moor."

— Old Ballad.

"HERE'S YOUR CHRISTMAS DINNER!"

NOTHING can be more bewitching to the observant beholder, whether or not an intending customer, than the night-market scene, whether it be located in some old Flemish town where the pencils of Teniers, Van Ostade and their *confrères* have seemed to locate it more especially,—or in damp and foggy London, or in one of the larger American towns, to the markets of which have been made tributary not only all the farmyards of the East and North, but all the great plains and prairies of the West. Over such a scene, wherever located, hangs that indescribable blending of softened light and deepening shadow, making all the objects exposed seem less gross and material than they could be in the broad glare of day, and investing venders and buyers with a certain romance born of the time and the place. Eminently well has this feeling been caught by our artist, in the present



"HERE'S YOUR CHRISTMAS DINNER!"

instance, the near and distant lights being blended with singular skill and appropriateness; and meanwhile the artist has also succeeded in conveying the impression that the poultry-seller is something above the average of his condition,—and that his poultry have been well kept, well fed, and well cared for. Taken all in all, the story of "Here's Your Christmas Dinner!" supposedly issuing from the lips of the vender, is in all regards happily told and pleasing.

WINTER AND SORROW.

WHERE the waving woods of summer glittered in the golden calm,
Toss the black, funereal branches, O so bleakly! in the air;
Where the lyre-throated linnnet poured its sweet, impassioned psalm
In the pink and purple jasmine, fall the fluttering snow-flakes
fair;
While the harvest-twinkling hill-tops, traced on the translucent
blue,
In the splendor-hearted summer fade in spectral fogs from view,
And the wan, wi d duck descendeth over trees and tarns away,
As I dream of friends departed, in and out the flesh to-day.

Over seas and over sand-wastes, some upon the earth-plane still
Think of thee, O poor, proud spirit! beating at thy prison-bars;
Of the old-time, by the yule-log, when the Christmas blasts blew
chill,
Or in cool, calm groves, green-raftered, when the roses shone
like stars!
Dear hearts! never more to know thee! never more? Ah! dark
decree,
Thus to meet one merry season, but to separated be.
Better thrid the thorns unfriended by the throngs of thoughtless
men,
Than to find the true and tender, then to weep farewells again!

In thy gates, O lilled Zion! in thy lordly gates of gold,
Where on bright, consummate planets ring the rich, triumphal
strains,
Some are with the bards and prophets, with the kings and warriors
old! —
While in hells of ice or fire some are writhing in their chains!
Woe! I saw their waxen cere-cloths, wet with unavailing tears;
Woe! I saw the funeral torches flaming by their plume-proud
biers;
Thus the dismal yester-shadows dim the sunshine of to-day! —
Ah! if memory could perish, misery would pass away.

Christ! O Christ! why mock and madden us with beautiful, bright
eyes,
With loose locks of mist-like glory, and with wine-red, winning
lips,
With cool, creamy arms that clasp us in a perfect Paradise,
Then the vivid, saintly vision let the coffin-lid eclipse?
"Better never live," I language thus my bale, with bated breath,
"Than to drop into the darkness, O so desolate! of death!
Better never love," I whisper, in my wickedness once more,
"Than to see our idols shattered at the shrines where we adore!"
— William H. Kernan.

THE ZACKENFALL, BOHEMIA.

It would be a trite remark, to any traveler of wide
experience, to say that the grandest of the world's
waterfalls are by no means the loveliest, and that
those most celebrated at once by geographers, guide-
book makers, and the ordinary world of travelers,
are very far from being the finest in their appeals to
the senses. Niagara is the world's wonder, in the
way of a cataract down-pour: the claim of the Falls



THE ZACKENFALL, BOHEMIA. — KRESSING.

of the Rhine, at Schaffhausen, to be the equal of the great American cataract, in any particular, having some time since been exploded, and even the half-mile leap of the Yo-Semite failing to rival it successfully. Meanwhile, the Falls of Trenton, though so far below Niagara in the essentials of true grandeur, are infinitely lovelier, and much more consonant to the feeling of the spectator, after long and attentive observation. And in Europe, the two cataracts really the loveliest are scarcely mentioned at all, and very rarely visited, in comparison with numberless others. The first of these is the Fall of Giessbach, on the Lake of Brienz, in Switzerland, a few miles eastward from Interlaken, pouring down a flood of white broken water, over rocks and through a mass of green foliage, in the very delirium of natural beauty. Giess-

bach has a peer, however, in another cataract of the same broken character, which we in the present issue present, from one of the ablest of German pencils, and, as we believe, for the first time to American eyes, the location being altogether off the ordinary line of travel. The Zackenfall, as its name indicates, is the Fall of the little river Zacken, near Petersdorf, in Northeastern Bohemia, in a part of those grand mountains, at no great distance becoming the romantic Hartz of "Faust" and the "Walpurgis Night." It has a descent of some one hundred and twenty feet, in three leaps, over broken rocks and amid the fir scenery of the forest; and the world may well be explored in vain, to show anything more truly lovely and bewitching than this hidden glory of Bohemia, which should become one of the boasts of Germany.

THE MISTLETOE IN AMERICA.

"UNDER the mistletoe-bough;"
Not in the far-away British Isles,
But here in the West it is glimmering, now —
An exile from home of three thousand miles;
And the leaves are as darkly fresh and green,
And the berries as crisply waxen-white,
As they show to-night, in so many a scene,
In Old England's halls of light.

Quiet it hangs on the wall,
Or pendant droops from the chandelier,
As if never a mischief or harm could fall
From its modest intrusion, there or here!
And yet, how many a pulse it has fired,
How many a lip made nervously bold,
When youthful revel went on, untired,
In the Christmas days of old!



WHAT KEEPS HIM?

The lover's heart might be low,
And the love of his lady very high,
With no one her inmost heart to know,
Or the riddle to read of the haughty eye;
But under the mistletoe fairly caught, —
What maiden coyness or pride could dare
To turn from the kisses as sudden as thought
And ardent as waiting prayer?

"*C'est là première pas qui conte !*"

So they say, in another far-away land;
And the one kiss given, more follow, as fruit,
As the dullest can easily understand;
And then, of the end to come, who knows,
Save the village bells and the welcome priest,
And the sister-maidens, with cheeks like the rose,
Who assist at the bridal feast?

Methinks, if the shamrock green
Is the leaf so dear to an Irish heart, —
To the mistletoe-berry's silver sheen
England's love has been owing no minor part;
And greenly its stiff-set leaves have twined
Round many a tenderest bridal-nest,
Since that saddest of tales all hearts enshrined
In the lay of the "Old Oak Chest."

What matter if centuries long
Have hidden a part of the mystery deep
That lay in the Druid's re-echoing song,
When it glistened in Stonehenge's mighty heap?
For enough still remains to make sure the truth
That it symbolized the great Perennial Good,
And they saw from its joints springing Endless Youth
That the force of the Ages withstood.

Little sprig from the mother land! —
It is pleasant and cosy to have you here,
When the festive and lonely waiting stand
On the verge of their varying Christmas cheer.
Though we can not transplant your pride of growth,
Any more than the hawthorn, wayward and coy,
You can give us, still, the Old English troth,
And a thought of Old English joy.

Ha! what? Do the leaves grow dim? —
Do the white waxen berries wither and fleet,
Ere even the notes of the Christmas Hymn
Float in o'er the hush of the silent street?
But even if so, may kind heaven forefend
That the omen shall fade from heart or brow,
Of that truth to lover, that fealty to friend,
Ever typed by the mistletoe-bough! — *Henry Morford.*

ST. ASAPH CATHEDRAL.

THIS least and last of the cathedrals of England, and yet in many regards one of the most interesting, stands in the small town of the same name, in Flintshire, North Wales, some six miles from the watering-place of Rhyl, on the Channel, and on the line of the branch road leading from Chester by Denbigh to Holyhead, though off the main route to that port and thence to Kingstown and all Ireland. Among its points of interest is the fact that the bishop of this diocese, alone of all the English bishops, is a bishop *only*—he, of all the list, having no seat in the House of Lords, and consequently being only an ecclesiastical dignitary with no entangling political duties. This cathedral also enjoys an advantage not common to the great religious houses, of standing where it can be widely and favorably seen; as it crowns a pleasant eminence, midway between the small rivers Elwy and Clwyd, the old town deriving from the former its ancient British name of "Llanwely." The more important of our three pictures of this edifice conveys a very excellent idea of its appearance as seen at a little distance, as also of its rural surroundings, one of the staunch old bridges, and other features of the Welsh scenery. The second gives an equally accurate view of the north transept and the central tower; while the third shows the very chaste and handsome choir, looking toward the chancel. Architecturally it is cruciform, like all its fellows, though much less elaborate than most of them in outside plan and finish. It has a length of 179 feet, with a breadth of 108; and the square central tower rises 98 feet above the naves and transepts, giving a total height of about 130 feet. There is a fine modern window in the east end, said to be an imitation of one at Tintern Abbey; and it has several other windows, of stained glass, worthy of notice.

The see of St. Asaph is very ancient, having been established in the sixth century by Kentigern, otherwise called St. Mungo, Bishop of Glasgow; and the name seems to have been derived from Asa, or Asaph, a bishop who succeeded him. The first build-



NORTH TRANSEPT.

ing, of wood, was burned in 1282; and the next and more substantial one, of stone, erected by Bishop Anian, was materially damaged during the wars of Owen Glendower. It was partially rebuilt about 1480, but remained unfinished until 1770, when the choir was completed by the Dean and Chapter. It was seriously desecrated in the Parliamentary wars, being used as a barrack and a hospital, and even as an office and a stable! The interior of this cathedral has some very handsome monuments, among others a mural tablet to Felicia Hemans, the poetess.

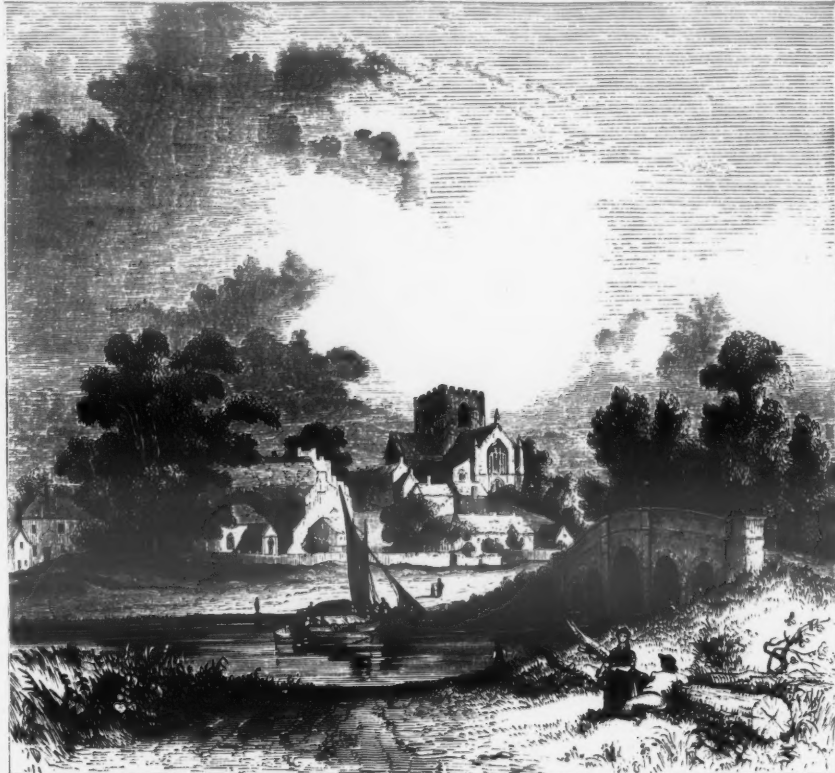
LOST LILLIAN BRACY;

A TRADITION OF CHARLES II.'S TIME.

CHAPTER IV.

SIR RALPH EDGE CUMBE AT THE MAY-POLE.

Some thirty years of age, or perhaps two or three years beyond that limit of first-manhood—tall and erect in figure, with the sinew of the athlete married



ST. ASAPH CATHEDRAL.

to the grace of the courtier—frank-faced, with laughing brown eyes, curling brown hair falling upon his shoulders, and the long, sweeping mustache of the French fashion; with the doublet and hose of wine-color, richly plumed hat, sword with a jewel at the hilt, and loose riding-boots of russet leather, every detail of which seemed to become him better than the preceding—certainly, again, this man was worth all the attention bestowed upon him by the master of the Hope and his tenants,—worthy of a much more cordial grasp of the hand than that given by Walter Bracy on his first alighting, but which he repaid with one keen enough to be quite satisfactory to the other.

A few words of inquiry and information, conveying (with good will, or no?) an invitation from Bracy to make some days or at least hours of stay at the Hope, and the assurance that Sir Ralph had broken away from the revels at Whitehall for no less a purpose than to spend a single night at a place so well known and loved of old; and the conversation, as still they stood at near the edge of the group, Sir Ralph yet holding his own bridle, flowed into what the late mood of Walter Bracy was so likely to make its channel.

"A set of surly knaves, Sir Ralph! Respectful enough, as how should they dare to be anything else?—and yet years make them nothing more than this!" he said, with a bitterness of tone which perhaps the other better understood than himself.

"I grieve to hear you say so, Master Bracy," said Sir Ralph, earnestly. "A happy yeomanry is the true boast of Old England, and the coming back of the 'Merrie Monarch' and his nobles, and the many broad pieces that they must be throwing abroad over the land, should certainly make smiles lie deeper than the skin. Have you not spoiled them, one way or the other?"

"Been too rough with them, or eke too smooth?" he asked in reply.

"Scarcely that, and yet something like it. Made yourself too nearly their equal, or kept yourself too far removed from them?"

Walter Bracy laughed harshly—that laugh grating on the ears of Edgumbe like a false note in music or the cry of a door on its unoiled hinges,—as he said:

"Not the first, I'll be sworn. As to the last: that

is as it may be. They must be made to know their places, however, and they *will*!"

"True, true—yes, their places, as you say," was the reply of the knight. But well it is that thought is silent; else would the black brows of Walter Bracy have bent themselves even more closely, hearing the inner words that followed the spoken reply:

"A hard master, and a man not to be trusted, by this hand! Of the old blood, and yet hated. When men are so disliked, by those who live nearest to them and see them most freely in all moods, then is there something rotten within them, and they have usually done some deed to deserve the hatred. This must be looked into!"

But this reflection was suddenly broken in upon by the voice of Bracy:

"Come—we have had enough of these clowns and their folly and impudence. Let us on to the Hope: supper is near in time."

"If you will do me that favor, Master Bracy, do not await me here," answered Sir Ralph. "Spare me ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, to see these people at their merriment, to the which I fancy that I can buy them back with one or two broad pieces, if in no other mode; and then, horsed as I am, I will join you at the Hope within the moment thereafter. I have been so long absent from England, that even the dullest of the old sports will be new to me, again."

This suggestion met with no opposition from Walter Bracy, who may have been rather glad than the reverse of the opportunity to reach the Hope a few moments in advance of his unexpected guest; so he merely said, as he took his way toward the bridge:

"Be it as you will, Sir Ralph; and much good may you have of the knaves! But join us soon, before the cook loses his temper or the meats are cinders."

Sir Ralph Edgumbe, bridle still on arm, watched his host until he saw the latter at the bridge; then he turned to the merry-makers, for the last few minutes guiltless of that name, and said:

"Take this bridle, some youngster who wishes a bright silver groat."

The claimants for the groat, among the younger



CHOIR.

boys, were so many as for the moment to embarrass the choice, the result being the disbursement of some half-dozen of those pieces, and at least three holding the bridle of the noble bay, while other three looked on with a sense of aiding. Then Sir Ralph drew his purse from his pocket, took from it a full handful of silver coins, and threw them among the crowd, with a result of scrambling and struggling that may well be conceived; and when the last had been secured, and the lucky lads and lasses had

recovered their breath from the scramble, Walter Bracy, over beyond the Lea, toward the Hope, may well have heard and not been overpleased by the shout that went up from an hundred throats, all whose owners by that time knew his name and condition:

"Long live Sir Ralph Edgecumbe!"

But the popularity of the royalist was by no means yet at its culmination. The shout had scarcely died, when he fixed his keen brown eyes on the face of a pretty and modest lass of perfected eighteen, darted into the circle, with the hearty and rapid abandon of a boy, drew her arm within his, and shouted merrily, at once to the musicians and the group surrounding him:

"To your places, for one more dance, good masters and mistresses! Musicians, a lively reel, on your lives, ere the setting of sun and the end of the May-day! Grudge me not this comely lass, and see which of you can foot it more merrily than we! To your places, all, and away go we!"

The influence of mind over matter is scarcely greater, if greater at all, than that of predominating mind over the ordinary in mass. But five minutes since the revel had seemed to be ended, dully if not unpleasantly; now, it was, however near its close, merely at its mad height, incited by one hilarious mover of the whole. All seemed to be in motion at once: arms waved, curls flew wild, farthingales flew still more wildly, and feet twinkled as they had not done in all that day or many a festival day preceding. Sir Ralph and his pretty partner were the centre of all observation, the knight laughing as he capered, the damsel blushing as she whirled, but other whirls all around them and the mass in glad confusion, so that the old tottered from their benches to clap hands, and shouts of mad merriment arose from score upon score of voices, that might easily again have reached Walter Bracy at the Hope and yet more moved the black-browed to ill-satisfaction.

But this could last but for a little time, as it was certainly not intended to be of long duration. And as Sir Ralph led his blushing and now heated partner back to her place among the others of her condition, he could scarcely forbear giving utterance to his thought, a pendant to that of an hour before:

"Beshrew me but I could make a happy tenantry of these people, and have something more than eye and lip service! Walter Bracy—Walter Bracy—there is something wrong with you and yours, or you had never these sullen looks, that so quickly become smiles when they bend even upon a courteous stranger! Something wrong?—ay, that there must be; and what do I at Bracy's Hope, but that I may perchance have the duty to discover what is hidden and right what is wrong?"

He was again at the outer circle of the revelers, now preparing to break up indeed under the reminder of the setting sun and the myriad sounds of evening; and even as the thought passed through his mind there fell a heavy hand upon his shoulder, with the familiar slap of an equal. Well assured that none of his own condition was near, he turned him rapidly, with the sharp words ringing from his lips:

"What! Who are you, that use such liberties?"

"What, to thyself! Has Sir Ralph Edgecumbe left his memory behind him among the Mounseers? Dang it, thee bees a great man, now, and no more a boy, but thee was a boy once, and then thee didn't mind a sturdy slap from Stephen Chester!"

CHAPTER V.

THE STORY TOLD BY STEPHEN CHESTER.

"Eh? What! Stephen Chester indeed, as I live!" was the exclamation of the knight, at last recognizing one of the old servitors at the Hope, remembered through so many years of change and danger. He seemed a man of fifty, or a little beyond, with a shock head of brown hair scarcely confessing to those years; though a face almost enough wrinkled for seventy, with simple good-humor and quiet drollery looking out from every crease of the bronzed skin, fully counterbalanced the favorable deception of the hair. From the hose and jerkin of brown, broad cap, and knife at belt, he was evidently now the keeper of the chase, and not a little to be credited with the freedom of that fine old wood from neglect and decay.

"You are right, good Stephen! I did not mind a sturdy slap, then, nor does it irk me now, when I have borne so many with worse will!" heartily responded Sir Ralph, when fully assured of the identity, and meeting with an earnest grip the broad

hand before it could be withdrawn in the timidity of second thought.

"I hope thee don't mind my liberty, Sir Ralph," said the old servitor, his face a little ashamed, and at that somewhat late moment taking off his cap. "Twas woundy forward, o' me, I do bethink me, now; but I was so glad to see thee that I forgot—"

"Not another word, good Stephen, and replace your cap, before I do indeed grow angry!" said the knight. "And well met, old playfellow, before I ride within yon gates. You seem all that is not changed at Bracy's Hope. Tell me"—and he drew the serving-man away, with a touch on the arm, beyond the ear-shot of the now-dispersing merry-makers—"tell me, how came Walter Bracy to be lord of the Hope?—and how manages he in his charge?"

"Lord, Sir Ralph!—it wouldn't do, thee knows, for a poor body"—commenced the forester, with obvious hesitation, and looking round to be sure that none heard question or answer.

"Stephen Chester, it *will* do for you to obey my orders, or I shall pay back that slap, with interest!" again interrupted the knight, with the partial trifling of his manner underlaid with something of commanding earnest that the other could not fail to feel and understand.

"He! he! Thee is merry yet, Sir Ralph; and so I am glad to see thee," said the servitor. "For, dang it!—we be woundy lonesome and dull-like, here! Well, then, thee must know—"

"Begin at the beginning, and speak rapidly, good Stephen," once more the knight broke in. "Supper is waiting me at the Hope; but before I step my foot within the doors of Walter Bracy, I would know him better. Remember that I have been so long with my king in exile, that everything is changed and all the old must be grown new, as all the new meseems has grown old."

"Yes, it be parlous long, Sir Ralph," replied Stephen, "since we ha' seen thee here; but thee knows summatt, and the rest old Stephen 'll tell thee, belike. Well—thee remembers when Sir Everard Bracy fell at Naseby fight; and mayhap thee knows that his poor wife, my lady, died shortly after."

"Yes, I know thus much, though I was then young in the wars, with no beard on lip or chin," said the knight.

"Well, somehow or other," pursued Stephen, with a grimace of his wrinkled face and a corresponding flash out of the cheerful eyes—"somehow or other—dang it!—I never could bide him, at least not then!—but when Old Noll was giving away all the lands of the old families to his psalm-singing crop-ears, Walter Bracy, who, thee knows, was a poor cousin of Sir Everard's—"

"Yes, I know thus much, too," again interrupted Sir Ralph; "and I knew, though she was older than myself, by some years, the lady whom he wedded—Mistress Maude Weatherby, of the Croft, nigh Fenton-in-the-Marsh:—ay, a true lady, and a good, by this hand!"

"Well," pursued Stephen, "Walter Bracy somehow managed to be on the right side, though dang it!—he had done nought to help any side, except drinking and gaming, and belike a trick or two; and Bracy's Hope fell into his hands. Thee makes a poor fellow speak plainly, Sir Ralph, and so e'en out wi' it!—it was a sad day for us all when he came to be lord, with his masterful ways that didn't seem, all the while, like he was born to them; and the old fields ha' never smiled since, with his black muzzle over them, as they did when good Sir Everard reaped crop and paid wage."

"Ay, I can well believe you," replied Sir Ralph, somewhat reflectively. "But now? The king has his own again, and so should his people have theirs. Where is the heir of Sir Everard?—and how manages Walter Bracy to be on the right side once more, now that Old Noll is gone to—well, we will not mind where?"

"The heir of Sir Everard—the girl, thee means?" echoed Stephen, with some surprise in his tone. "Ah, thee remembers that, too! It is woundy sad, Sir Ralph; but Walter Bracy is the only heir now; and somehow he does manage to be on all sides, so men say. He is a king's man, now; and much joy may the king have o' him!"

"The heir of Sir Everard—yes, I said as much. It was a girl, I bethink me, if memory fail not. What of her? Died she so young, that Walter Bracy can hold as the only heir?"

"Yes, thee is right, Sir Ralph," answered Stephen. "It was a girl; but thee doesn't remember her as I

do—no, how could thee? She was the sweetest little thing—was Lillian Bracy—'Lady Lillian,' that we called her when little more than a baby. When Sir Everard was gone, and her mother died broken-hearted, after Naseby, and when Walter Bracy held all these lands from the Parliament, the poor thing was taken home by Squire Jasper, nigh Oldham, of the same blood as Sir Everard, and cared for as his child should have been."

"Well, well?" spoke Sir Ralph, somewhat impatiently, as the servitor paused.

"One night little 'Lady Lillian' went out into the great wood near Squire Jasper's—so they said—and she never came back! She was stolen, or killed, or fell into some ditch or bog-hole, belike, or summatt; and no one has heard of her from that day to this."

"Went out into the wood, at night?" commented Sir Ralph, reflectively. "Not so—the story lacks likelihood. Carried off, or murdered, beyond a doubt! Heard you never of any one suspected of foul dealing with the child that might one day be in the way of false holders?"

"Sir Ralph," spoke Stephen, in an even lower tone than he had before been employing—"thee wouldn't put a poor serving-man in the road of danger, though, my whittle to an ashen twig, thee would ride into it thyself without stopping to count two! Don't 'ee ask me anything more, please! Supper is waiting at the Hope, thee knows. Men do talk, belike when they are sober, and maybe only when they have a drop in their heads; and Walter Bracy is nought the better for what they said, years gone. When poor little 'Lady Lillian' was out of the way, he was the next heir, thee knows; and—King or Parliament, there is no one to dispute the title with him now, and men do say that some day he will be Sir Walter Bracy."

"Humph! perhaps—that as may be!" was the comment of the knight. Then he added, after a moment of pause; "Mistress Maude Bracy—she is living, doubtless, or I should have heard of her death. Lives she in reasonable happiness and comfort with this man of the black brows and the sides that seem so many?"

"Please, Sir Ralph, thee is going to the Hope; thee can see better with thy own eyes than with old Stephen's tongue!" was the cautious reply of the forester, accepted by the knight in the same spirit that dictated it. For he only said, as he motioned for his bay and set foot in the stirrup,

"You are a good fellow, and an honest, Stephen Chester; and fear not that you have spoken one word too many, in my hearing. We may have more to speak, and something to do, some day—who can tell?"

With a wave of the hand and a touch of the spur to his mettled bay, he was away down the pleasaunce and at the bridge almost at the same moment; while the servitor stood looking after him, with the admiration of poverty for condition, of age for youth, and of all ages and conditions for those who seem to combine strength with goodness. And as he looked he syllabled some words, unheard by any others, and perhaps scarcely more than half understood by himself:

"Walter Bracy, if I was thee—and St. Stephen of Chichester be thanked that I am no such man, in heart or holding!—I would scent danger as my brach Black Poll winds fox or badger, and knock him on the pate or ever he came within my doors, or flee away out of the one as he came into the other! So would I, by our Lady of Patience!—but so will not *you*, while the devil lives and has snares and pitfalls for his own."

CHAPTER VI.

A NEW SERVANT FOR MAUDE BRACY.

Two days had passed since the scene of merry-making in the pleasaunce. All that now remained to mark the past existence of that May-day, was to be found in some withered flowers and some shreds of colored stuffs lying on the close sward of the lawn, and here and there a well-picked meat-bone, an empty bottle, or some other trifling relic of the feast, along the line where the booths had stood, or back under the edge of the wood, in the place held by the gipsy tents on that memorable occasion.

Sir Ralph Edgecumbe had paid his hurried visit to Bracy's Hope, and returned to Whitehall, promising to come again at an early day and once more enjoy the hospitality of the Hope. What he had discovered during that brief sojourn of a single night and

day, as to the bearing of Walter Bracy within the walls of his house, and the marital relations existing between the master of the Hope and its mistress, Maude Bracy,—in earlier days known by him as Maude Weatherby, of the Croft,—must be left at this time undeveloped, except as some suspicion of the character of those discoveries may be conveyed in a rencontre occurring between husband and wife on the second afternoon following the merry-making.

In one of the minor apartments of the Hope, apparently a sitting or reception room, leading away from the great hall, and separated from it by still another room devoted to the limited library of its occupant,—the mistress of the Hope was at a certain time of the late afternoon walking up and down, with head drooped forward upon her breast, hands clasped before her as if with some tension of suffering, and face and form alike bearing testimony to the special wretchedness of the moment and the broken and unhappy character of the whole life.

The cheerful May sunlight, marking the decline of day by the low point of its direction, came in through the lozenge panes of two small windows, set very high, and lit up pleasantly the dark walls, papered in imitation of embossed Spanish leather, the oaken wainscoting, almost black with age, the waxen floor, showing the same antiquity, and a few heavy articles of furniture, dark in wood and leathern in upholstery, as well became the sombre solidity of the apartment. And as she passed and repassed the lines of the windows, the rays of light, a little silvered in dust, fell upon the graying hair of the matron, her sad face, her black robes, and the clasp of her hands that seemed to be wringing themselves without volition of the owner.

Twenty years before—nay, possibly fifteen, or even ten, Maude Bracy had undoubtedly been handsome. For the figure had been tall and graceful, as indeed it was at the present, though now no little stooped with sorrow; the hair, now rapidly graying, had been of an abundant chestnut, silken and glossy; the face, now drawn into lines of sadness and suffering, had been a long oval, exquisitely moulded; the eyes, now seeming to have had half their brightness burned away by hot tears, had been of sweet and loving gray; and there were those yet living—ay, many of them—who remembered how plumed cavaliers, before Worcester, had often drunk to the matchless beauty of Maude Weatherby's dainty hands.

It is a bad habit, ay, a dangerous one—that of self-communion in words that reach the outer air and may come to an ear of which the presence is not suspected; and yet which of us, under strong passion, whether of fear, or grief, or of wrong, has never uttered words intended for no human hearing? Maude Bracy, one of the world's sufferers, was supplementing the action of her clasped hands and the helpless misery of her bowed figure, by communing aloud with herself as she walked:

"King or Parliament, Kingdom or Protectorate," almost moaned the broken voice, "it makes no change in my unhappiness. Walter Bracy, for whom I sacrificed so many others, has long ceased to love me; and now I am only too sure that he has come to hate me as a very obstacle in his path. Strange and ominous men, of whom I know nothing except to fear them instinctively, engross all the hours that he spends within these walls; and his words grow more harsh and cruel day by day. Would to heaven that the time had come for me, too, when I loved him no longer!—then I might be less wretched. But no—false and cruel as he is, how can I do otherwise than remember the lover and husband of my youth, the father of my dead children! And what is coming to us, oh what is coming to us, before the days are many? His wealth is passing away in his reckless courses; and even that and his shameless falsehood to the vow once pledged to me, are as nothing to what I fear. These dark men, who have again been with him to-day, alone and for hours! They say the time is dark with treason: I dread some fearful conspiracy—"

The poor lady's monologue was suddenly and painfully interrupted. Any sound in the apartment drowned by the murmur of her own voice, she had been quite unaware of the entrance of Walter Bracy, until his heavy hand had seized hold of her arm with a grasp little less than painful, while his hoarse voice spoke, almost in her ear:

"Maude Bracy, what word did I hear you speak? No trifling: answer me at once!"

"What word?" echoed the unhappy wife, shrink-

ing back from him with a gesture which only too well told that this was no new repulsion.

"What word? You know what word I mean, and I know that you know!" was the harsh response, for one moment holding the arm with such tenacity that she could not have withdrawn it with any effort; then more throwing it away than allowing it to slip from his grasp. "What word? The word 'conspiracy.' I heard you muttering it as I entered. Do not dare to deny it; and look well that you play no tricks with my patience! Are you meddling in my affairs, or in what your addled brain may choose to think my affairs? Answer me—what means that word on your lips?"

Few hearts that would not have been melted by the glance and tone of entreaty with which the unhappy wife sought to mollify the incarnated trouble of her existence—trying to take his hand and appeal to what had once been holiest between them, in the pleading words:

"Oh, do not be so harsh with me, Walter! Husband!"

She might have been pleading to one of the oaks in the pleasure—no one of the stones of the garden wall. For the only reply that came, with the black brows bent in anger and suspicion, was:

"That word, I say! How came it on your lips?"

"Oh heaven, I must dissemble! He would strike me to the floor, perhaps kill me where I stand, if I dared to tell him my fearful suspicions." A pause—a struggle—and then came the words of deception, aloud, though scared and broken: "Why, Walter, husband, what can cause this rough usage? If I used the word you name, it must have been unconsciously. Ah, this it is, perchance. I may have been thinking, aloud, as I fear me is sometimes my habit, of my reading of yester-even, of Cataline and Cicero, and the plotters of dark days in old Rome: what more?"

And now it was Walter Bracy's turn to murmur under his breath, as he turned aside with a gesture of contempt for the woman who could so waste her time in dealing with the dead figures of Roman history:

"Pshaw! what a slave and fool am I, to be frightened by the ghost of Cataline, filtered through the silly brain of a woman!" Then he turned again toward his shrinking wife, moved by some feeling which he could not himself have analyzed, and said:

"No more of these frightened looks, Maude! You are a fool; perchance I am little better. We will forget both follies, and at once."

Again came the unspoken words to the very lips of Maude Bracy: "Forget? oh heaven! How lightly he speaks of forgetting a pang!" But the spoken words that followed were only part of her long and sad life-submission: "Yes, it will be best so: we will forget it."

At this juncture a moon-faced girl, one of the servants of the household, came unannounced into the room, with her eyes all aflame with importance. Maude Bracy, in her misery, seemed not to notice the girl; but the master, turning almost fiercely on her, exclaimed:

"Who called you, hussy?—and how dare you?"

"If thee pleases, measter, and thee, mistress, there do be a girl in the scullery, a-wantin' to take service at the Hope," was the explanation of her coming, supplied by the serving-wench, evidently with less fear of the harsh master than that held by the long-suffering wife. (Such things have been, elsewhere and otherwhen!) And not even the threatening bend of the black brows could prevent her going on with what was really the burthen of her errand. "She be main young-looking, and woundy poor, like, mistress; and Nelly Biggin she do say that we be short o' help in the larder, and—"

Here she was peremptorily broken in upon by Walter Bracy, with an order admitting of no misconception.

"Off with you, hussy, and send the baggage away, instantly! We have enough of hangers-on, at Bracy's Hope, and see that some already here are not sent packing!"

To which the unfrightened menial responded by no movement to leave the room, but a compromise of verbal reply:

"Ees, measter, I be going; but I did think that the poor young thing—"

"Send her away, I bid you!" spoke the master, fiercely.

"Yes, we will send her away, as you say, Walter," said Maude, speaking for the first time. "But wait a moment, for charity's sake, if she is so poor. She

may be starving. I will go to the scullery, and see her."

"Set foot thither, if you dare, Maude Bracy!" thundered the brutal master, careless of the presence of the servant. "Who disobeys *me*, in this house? Send her away, hussy, I bid you, and I bid you for the last time!"

There was that in the gesture of the harsh man, indicating that in another moment he might violently assault the poor serving-wench; and the latter turned to the door, to obey, but firing a parthian shot as she went, destined, like many another of its class, to turn the whole event of the battle.

"Ees, measter, I be going; but she do have such a sweet baby-face, such dear brown eyes and golden hair, that my heart do bleed for her, so woundy poor!"

"What is that you say, hussy? Brown eyes and golden hair?" ejaculated the master, turning suddenly, and with that on his face which the higher intelligences may have been sorry to read, even there. "Now that I think of it, we will see this wonder in rags. Send her here, at once."

"Oh, Walter Bracy! husband!—what will you not do to insult and crush me!" the outraged wife could not avoid muttering, not daring the scream that was rising from her tortured heart.

"Did I hear you muttering, Maude Bracy? Have I not a right to send away whom I will—see whom I will—employ whom I will—in my own house?" So half sneered and half threatened the master, with only the heart-broken reply, heard, one may not doubt, higher in heaven than many a louder exclamation:

"Yes, Walter, oh yes; you have a right, to see whom you please, employ whom you please: be sure that I make no objection." Again, only the powers above could hear the words that only half rose to the lips and spent themselves in an inarticulate sigh of suffering: "Heaven pardon this degradation, and forgive me the falsehoods that I do not dare refuse to utter!"

The door of the apartment opened again, and the serving-wench once more stood in it, ushering in the poor waif of girlhood who had already supplied, unwittingly, such a bone of contention to the master and mistress of Bracy's Hope. Both paused as she entered and courtesied awkwardly, with finger in mouth and all signs of awe in the presence of "great people;" but with how different a regard of what was truly an anomaly in the experience of either!

"Please, measter and mistress, this be Letty Bryce, as she do call herself."

What saw they, as they looked—that pair so illy matched, and yet equally interested (how much more than they knew!) in the mere child who courtesied so clownishly at the door? A figure rather *petite* than of larger or taller mould, so far as it could be judged through the coarse and ill-made garment, half in rags, dependent from shoulder and hip. A face that had been well described by the serving-wench as that of a "baby," in its youth and roundness, with brown eyes that might under some circumstances have been pleasant and almost pretty; and a wild luxuriance of golden hair, tangled into the very semblance of a mop, as if unkempt and uncared for during weeks or even months. All this, and dirty—no other designation can quite convey the reality; dirty, not only in garments but in face and hands, as if unused to even the commonest decencies of life, if not indeed in the habit of sleeping in the field with the cattle or in the sty with the swine. An old bonnet, like the gown, more than half in tatters, and made doubly disfiguring by being hung upon one side of the head, completed this most singular and most melancholy picture of youthful squalidness, awkwardness and ignorance.

Yet what was it that, even as he gazed on the strange and uncleanly apparition, Walter Bracy more than half muttered, only checking the outward utterance with his clenched teeth?

"A beauty in dirt and rags, by the bones of Old Noll! Wash her—and why should she not be washed?—ay, washed and kissed?"

What was it that poor Maude Bracy mused, at the same moment, equally below her breath:

"She is beautiful, even in her filth and rags! God help her, that ever she set foot here, where Walter Bracy saw her!"

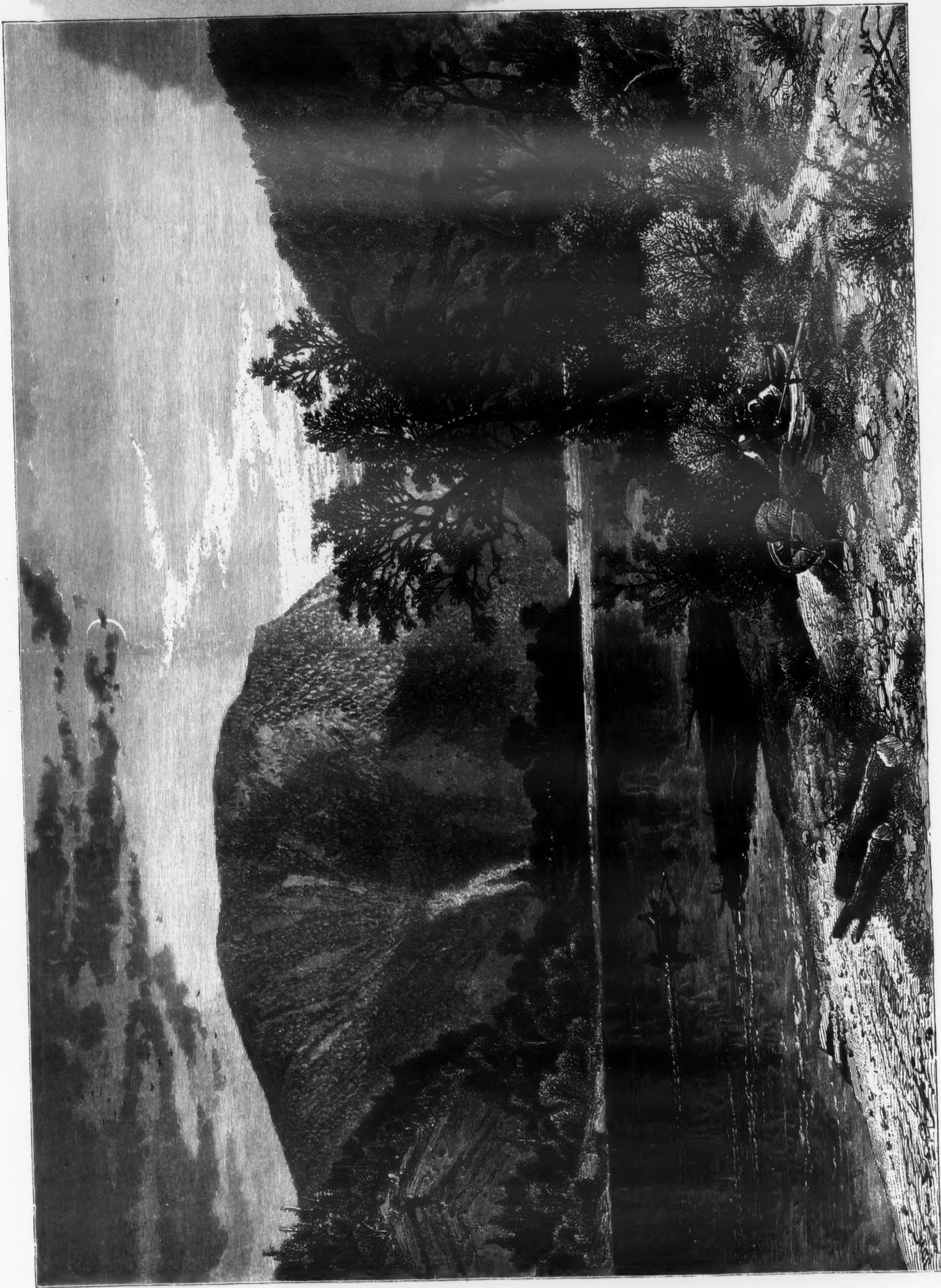
[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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WINTER.

The trees stand shivering in the frosty air;
 On branch and bank lies thick the clinging snow.
 The pool is sheeted with a slippery glare,
 Its summer gladness perished long ago.
 A wreck, beyond repair, the old mill seems,
 A type alike of manhood and the time —
 Decay o'ercreeping all his busy schemes:
 Himself low buried 'neath the winter rime.



DELAWARE WATER GAP. — J. D. WOODWARD.